

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. Apparatus to process issue data pertaining to a system, the apparatus including:

a prioritization engine to receive issue data from a reporting entity via a network, the issue data reporting an issue pertaining to the system and including an identifier to identify the reporting entity; and

a user performance module to access a database, and utilizing the identifier, to retrieve performance data regarding the reporting entity from a database, the performance data indicative of a past performance of the reporting entity in reporting issues pertaining to the system;

the prioritization engine automatically to prioritize a response activity, responsive to the issue, utilizing the performance data regarding the reporting entity.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the performance data indicates a historical accuracy with which the reporting entity has previously reported issues pertaining to the system.

3. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the historical accuracy is expressed in terms of a number of false positive issue data received from the reporting entity.

4. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the performance data indicates a rate at which the reporting entity has previously reported issues pertaining to the system.

5. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the user performance module is to assess validity of the issue pertaining to the system as reported in the issue data, and to update the performance data regarding the reporting entity based on the assessed validity of the issue.

6. The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the user performance module is to update the performance data by registering at least one of a false positive and a false negative with respect to the issue.

7. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the prioritization engine is to communicate the issue data to an agent for performance of the response activity, the communicating of the issue data to the agent being performed according to a priority assigned to the issue.

8. The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the agent is to assess the validity of the issue, and to cause of the updating of the performance data regarding the reporting entity based on the assessed validity of the issue.

9. The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the agent is at least one of an automated agent and a human agent.

10. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the prioritization engine is automatically to increment a count value indicative a number of times that the issue, pertaining to the system, has been reported, and to prioritize the response activity utilizing the count value.

11. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the prioritization engine is to retrieve a predetermined severity value associated with the issue, and to prioritize the response activity utilizing the predetermined severity value.
12. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the prioritization engine is to identify an issue type for the issue, and to retrieve the predetermined severity value utilizing the identified issue type.
13. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the prioritization engine is to retrieve predetermined exposure information associated with the issue, and to prioritize the response activity utilizing the predetermined exposure information, the predetermined exposure information indicating at least one of a loss and liability value attributed to the issue.
14. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the prioritization engine is to prioritize the response activity utilizing a combination of at least two of the performance data, a count of a number of times that the issue has been reported, a predetermined severity value associated with the issue, and exposure information associated with the issue.
15. The apparatus of claim 1, including an incentive engine to provide an incentive award to the reporting entity.
16. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the incentive award is provided to the reporting entity by the incentive engine responsive to receipt of the issue data.

17. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the incentive award is provided to the reporting entity by the incentive engine responsive to the performance data of the reporting entity satisfying predetermined criteria.

18. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the user performance module is selectively to present an issue data report mechanism based on the performance data indicative of the past performance of the reporting entity.

19. A computer-implemented method to process issue data pertaining to a system, the method including:

receiving issue data from a reporting entity, the issue data reporting an issue pertaining to the system and including an identifier to identify the reporting entity;

utilizing the identifier, accessing a database to retrieve performance data regarding the reporting entity, the performance data indicative of a past performance of the reporting entity in reporting issues pertaining to the system; and

automatically prioritizing a response activity, responsive to the issue, utilizing the performance data regarding the reporting entity.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein the performance data indicates a historical accuracy with which the reporting entity has previously reported issues pertaining to the system.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein the historical accuracy is expressed in terms of a number of false positive issue data received from the reporting entity.
22. The method of claim 19, wherein the performance data indicates a rate at which the reporting entity has previously reported issues pertaining to the system.
23. The method of claim 19, including assessing the validity of the issue pertaining to the system as reported in the issue data, and updating the performance data regarding the reporting entity based on the assessed validity of the issue.
24. The method of claim 23, wherein the updating of the performance data includes registering at least one of a false positive and a false negative with respect to the issue.
25. The method of claim 19, including communicating the issue data to an agent for performance of the response activity, the communicating of the issue data to the agent being performed according to a priority assigned to the issue.
26. The method of claim 25, wherein the agent is to assess the validity of the issue, and to cause of the updating of the performance data regarding the reporting entity based on the assessed validity of the issue.
27. The method of claim 25, wherein the agent is at least one of an automated agent and a human agent.
28. The method of claim 19, including automatically incrementing a count value indicative a number of times that the issue, pertaining to the system, has been reported, and prioritizing the response activity utilizing the count value.

29. The method of claim 19, including retrieving a predetermined severity value associated with the issue, and prioritizing the response activity utilizing the predetermined severity value.

30. The method of claim 29, including identifying an issue type for the issue, and retrieving the predetermined severity value utilizing the identified issue type.

31. The method of claim 19, including retrieving predetermined exposure information associated with the issue, and prioritizing the response activity utilizing the predetermined exposure information, the predetermined exposure information indicating at least one of a loss and liability value attributed to the issue.

32. The method of claim 19, including prioritizing the response activity utilizing a combination of at least two of the performance data, a count of a number of times that the issue has been reported, a predetermined severity value associated with the issue, and exposure information associated with the issue.

33. The method of claim 19, including providing an incentive award to the reporting entity.

34. The method of claim 33, wherein the incentive award is provided to the reporting entity responsive to receipt of the issue data.

35. The method of claim 33, wherein the incentive award is provided to the reporting entity responsive to the performance data of the reporting entity satisfying predetermined criteria.

36. The method of claim 19, including selectivity presenting an issue data report mechanism based on the performance data indicative of the past performance of the reporting entity.

37. Apparatus to process issue data pertaining to a system, the apparatus including:

prioritization means for receiving issue data from a reporting entity via a network, the issue data reporting an issue pertaining to the system and including an identifier to identify the reporting entity; and

performance means to access a database, and utilizing the identifier, to retrieve performance data regarding the reporting entity from a database, the performance data indicative of a past performance of the reporting entity in reporting issues pertaining to the system;

the prioritization means automatically for prioritizing a response activity, responsive to the issue, utilizing the performance data regarding the reporting entity.

38. A machine-readable medium and storing a sense of instructions that, when executed by a machine, cause the machine to:

receive issue data from a reporting entity, the issue data reporting an issue pertaining to the system and including an identifier to identify the reporting entity;

utilize the identifier, accessing a database to retrieve performance data regarding the reporting entity, the performance data indicative of a past performance of the reporting entity in reporting issues pertaining to the system; and

automatically prioritized a response activity, responsive to the issue, utilizing the performance data regarding the reporting entity.